

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A charge information processing apparatus for calculating charges required for working as a franchisee that provides automobile repairing services by a specific repairing method, comprising:
 - means for inputting scale information of a repair shop into said charge information processing apparatus; and
 - means for calculating introduction expenses required for facilities working as the franchisee providing the automobile repairing services by the specific repairing method, based on the scale information of a repair shop inputted into said charge information processing apparatus by said inputting means, and for calculating an instruction fee of said specific repairing method, a royalty, and prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for implementing said specific repairing method;
 - means for managing information of franchisees;
 - means for managing the number of franchisees for each region;
 - means for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of franchisees for each region that are managed by a franchisee number managing device.
2. (Cancelled).
3. (Cancelled).
4. (Currently Amended) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said specific repairing method comprises procedures associated with

said repairing method, repairing instruments, and repairing materials that are devised to complete repairs within a predetermined amount of time.

5. (Previously Presented) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said specific repairing method comprises procedures associated with said repairing method, repairing instruments, and repairing materials that are devised to perform repairs for predetermined charges.

6. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said specific repairing method includes a repairing process in which usage amounts of repairing materials are defined.

7. (Previously Presented) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said repairing instruments are provided with at least one measuring device for measuring repairing materials in the amounts corresponding to said usage amounts.

8. (Previously Presented) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said repairing method includes a repairing process in which usage duration of said repairing instruments is defined.

9. (Previously Presented) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said repairing instruments are provided with at least one timing device for timing such that usage of said repairing instruments is finished within said usage duration.

10. (Previously Presented) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said specific repairing method is targeted at repairing slight damages of automobiles.

11. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3 further comprising:

a first repairing material inventory managing device for managing inventories of repairing materials to be supplied to franchisees.

12. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3 further comprising:

an instructing material inventory managing device for managing inventories of instructing materials for instructing franchisees on said specific repairing method.

13. (Cancelled).

14. (Cancelled).

15. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3 further comprising:

a sales information acquiring device for acquiring sales information of franchisees;

a gross sales managing device for managing the sales information of franchisees acquired by said sales information acquiring device;

a gross sales estimating device for calculating gross sales estimation in a predetermined period based on the sales information that is managed by said gross sales managing device; and

a demand estimating device for estimating demands of repairing materials based on the results of the gross sales estimation calculated by said gross sales estimating device.

16. (Previously Presented) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said sales information acquiring device acquires sales information from an estimation apparatus that calculates estimations for automobile repairing services by said specific repairing method via at least one communicating device.

17. (Previously Presented) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said information inputted into said charge information processing apparatus comprises scale information of a repair shop, and said charge information processing apparatus further comprises:

an introduction plan information preparing device for preparing introduction plan information required for facilities working as said franchisee based on the scale information of the repair shop inputted by said inputting device.

18. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said calculating device calculates the introduction expenses based on the introduction plan information prepared by said information plan information preparing device.

19. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said charge calculating device calculates an amount totaling the introduction expenses, the instructing fee, the royalty, and the prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials.

20. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 3 further comprising:

a notifying device for notifying a charge collection handling agent of a request for collection handling of the total amount.

21. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 19 further comprising:

an outputting device for outputting the introduction expenses, the instructing fee, the royalty, the prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials, and the total amount thereof calculated by said charge calculating device after editing them in a predetermined document format.

22. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said outputting device is an image display apparatus.

23. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said outputting device is a printer.

24. (Previously Presented) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said predetermined document format is one of an estimate format and an invoice format.

25. (Currently Amended) A franchise system apparatus comprising:

a charge information processing apparatus included in the franchise system apparatus for calculating charges required for working as a franchisee that provides automobile repairing services by a specific repairing method;

an estimation apparatus included in the franchise system apparatus for calculating estimations of the automobile repairing services of said specific repairing method; and

a communicating device included in the franchise system apparatus for communicating data between said charge information processing apparatus and said estimation apparatus,

wherein said charge information processing apparatus comprises an input device for inputting scale information of a repair shop into said charge information processing apparatus;

a franchisee information managing device for managing information of franchisees;

a franchisee number managing device for managing the number of franchisees for each region;

a branching plan information preparing device for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of franchisees for each region that are managed by a franchisee number managing device; and

a charge calculating device for calculating introduction expenses required for facilities providing said automobile repairing services, based on scale information of a repair shop, an instructing fee for instructing said specific repairing method, a royalty, and prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for implementing said specific repairing method.

26. (Previously Presented) A franchise system apparatus according to claim 25, wherein said estimating apparatus is further provided with a second repairing material inventory managing device for managing inventories of repairing materials owned by franchisees.

27. (Previously Presented) A franchise system apparatus according to claim 26, wherein said estimation apparatus is further provided with an order information outputting device for outputting information for ordering repairing materials.

28. (Previously Presented) A franchise system apparatus according to claim 27, wherein said estimation apparatus is further provided with a sales managing device for managing information on sales by providing the automobile repairing services based on said specific repairing method.

29. (Currently Amended) A charge information processing apparatus for calculating introduction expenses required for facilities working as a franchisee that provides automobile repairing services by a specific repairing method, comprising:

a storage apparatus included in said charge information processing apparatus storing charge calculation base data for calculating introduction expenses corresponding to scale information of an automobile repair shop;

an inputting device for inputting the scale information of the automobile repair shop into said charge information processing apparatus; a franchisee information managing device for managing information of franchisees;

a franchisee number managing device for managing the number of franchisees for each region;

a branching plan information preparing device for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of franchisees for each region that are managed by a franchisee number managing device; and

a charge calculating device included in said charge information processing apparatus for calculating the introduction expenses based on the inputted scale information of a repair shop and said charge calculation base data stored in said storage apparatus;

wherein said charge calculation base data comprises:

calculating an instruction fee for said specific repairing method;

calculating a royalty, and

calculating prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for implementing said specific repairing method.

30. (Original) A charge information processing apparatus according to claim 29, wherein said charge calculation base data is an introduction plan table associating the scale information of the repair shop with introduction plan information, and a charge list, and said charge calculating device reads out introduction plan information corresponding to the inputted scale information with reference to said introduction

plan table, and calculates the introduction expenses based on the read out introduction plan information and the charge list.

31. (Cancelled).

32. (Cancelled).

33. (Cancelled).

34. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for obtaining introduction expenses required for a franchisee providing auto repairing services according to a specific repairing method, comprising the steps of:

inputting scale information of an automobile repair shop into a charge information processing apparatus;

comparing said scale information to introduction plan information stored in said charge information processing apparatus, wherein a determination is made of which items from said introduction plan information are required to be introduced into said repair shop; and

calculating the introduction expenses based on at least data obtained from said comparison between said scale information and said introduction plan information, and information included in charge calculation base data stored in said charge information processing apparatus wherein said charge calculation base data comprises:

calculating an instruction fee for said specific repairing method;

calculating a royalty, and

calculating prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for implementing said specific repairing method, such that introduction expense data is readily available;

wherein said charge information processing apparatus further comprises:

managing information of franchisees;

managing the number of franchisees for each region; and
outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of
franchisees for each region that are managed by a franchisee number managing device.

35. (Currently Amended) A computer program, which can be stored on a recordable medium, for controlling a computer, the program comprising:

means for accepting scale information of an automobile repair shop entered via an input apparatus and storing said scale information in a storage apparatus; and

means for managing information of franchisees;

means for managing the number of franchisees for each region;

means for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the
number of franchisees for each region that are managed by a franchisee number
managing device;

means for calculating introduction expenses based on said inputted scale information and charge calculation base data stored in said storage apparatus;

wherein said charge calculation base data comprises:

calculating an instruction fee for said specific repairing method;

calculating a royalty, and

calculating prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for
implementing said specific repairing method.